

Problem tenses

Entry test

- 1 Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it is as similar in meaning as possible to the sentence printed before it.

EXAMPLE: I've never had to work all through the night before.
This is *the first time I've had to work all through the night*.

- a Most of us became salesmen when we left university.
Most of us have
- b Our current manager started working here ten years ago.
Our current manager has
- c I haven't heard from Sarah for a couple of months.
The last
- d I used to find computers difficult before I started taking these lessons.
Since
- e Michael Owen is the best player I've seen so far in this competition.
I've yet

SCORE

FOR PRESENT PERFECT, SEE SECTION 1.

- 2 Fill each of the blanks with a suitable word or phrase.

EXAMPLE: As soon as he saw *what had* happened, he switched off the electricity.

- a When I started working for this company, I an architect for six years.
- b She'd studying marine biology but she finally decided on geography.
- c They on the road for a mere five minutes when they had a puncture.
- d It's almost half past nine: I would think they got there by now.
- e My intention is finished my studies by June.

SCORE

FOR FUTURE PERFECT, PAST PERFECT AND OTHER PERFECT FORMS, SEE SECTION 2.

- 3 Fill each of the blanks with a suitable word or phrase.

EXAMPLE: I *have been* writing this composition all evening.

- a What doing with yourself over the last couple of days?
- b I to fix the engine all morning, but finally had to admit defeat.
- c Next summer, I living here for ten years.
- d He claimed meaning to tell me about it but somehow forgot.
- e I was asking her if she'd like to come to the races on Saturday.

SCORE

FOR CONTINUOUS TENSES, SEE SECTION 3.

- 4 Fill each of the blanks with a suitable word or phrase.

EXAMPLE: Look out! We're *going* to hit the car in front!

- a At this rate, we're be exhausted by the time we finish.
- b The minute the train standstill, get on and try to find a seat.
- c By December, he'll working there for eighteen months.
- d They claim to be virtually on achieving everything they set out to do.
- e We were just about the house when Sue called.

SCORE

FOR FUTURE FORMS, SEE SECTION 4.

TOTAL SCORE

OVERVIEW

1 USES OF PERFECT TENSES

Present Perfect

We use Present Perfect to talk about things that took place:

- during a period that includes past and present:
They've been waiting here for an hour.
- in the past, but we're not saying exactly when:
Don't tell me he's bought another new car!
- in the past with an effect or result in the present:
I'm afraid I've forgotten my key.
- with the time adverb *just* meaning 'a short time ago' (American English uses Past Simple here):
She's just gone out.

Past Perfect

We use Past Perfect to talk about things that took place:

- before something else in the past (see Section 2.1):
I took the decision after I had spoken to John.
- during a period before an event in the past:
All day I'd been feeling nervous but the feeling vanished as soon as I saw her.

Future Perfect

We use Future Perfect to talk about:

- something that will be finished before a specified time in the future (see Section 2.2):
I'll have signed nearly a hundred letters by tonight.

For, since, already, yet, still, often, etc.

We often use Perfect tenses with these time words.

- Note important variations in their position:
We still haven't heard from Olga. We'd still not heard from her by the time evening arrived. (= more formal) I haven't heard a convincing explanation of her absence yet. She's phoned already. Has she phoned already? She's already phoned. She hasn't already phoned, has she?

2 USES OF CONTINUOUS TENSES

We use Continuous tenses to talk about things:

- continuing over a period, and temporary.
Continuous tenses show that we either view the event as incomplete, or that we don't know or don't need to say when it started or finished:
We're studying Shakespeare at school at the moment. (= temporary activity during these weeks)

It was raining when we left the building. (= we don't know or aren't interested in when the rain started or when it will finish)

- that are in the process of changing:
William's piano playing was improving every day. I think I'm getting more forgetful as I grow older.
- With verbs that describe a short action, e.g. *hit, knock, blink*, the action is repeated rather than continuous:
I've been ringing him all morning but he never seems to be in.
- We often use Past Continuous and Past Perfect Continuous to set the background to narrative events. Because it may not be clear when the activity begins or ends, they give the impression you are arriving in the middle of a scene:
Jo had been working all morning and was now spending a happy half hour doing nothing more taxing than staring into space. She was looking forward to her holiday in Scotland in a few days' time.

3 EXPRESSING THE FUTURE

English does not have one future tense. Instead, we use other tenses and modal verbs to refer to the future (see Section 4):

This time next week we'll be sitting our exams. (= we'll be in the middle of them)
When you arrive, you are to go straight to the registration desk.

watch out!

We don't use Present Perfect when an exact past time is mentioned and there is no connection with the present:

- ✗ *We've been to London in 1997.*
- ✓ *We went to London in 1997.*

- But we can use the Present Perfect if the period mentioned includes the past and present:
We've been here since half past six. I haven't done much work today. It's been raining for ages.
- We use Past Perfect for something that happened before something else. We can only use it with another Past tense:
I went to see him because his wife had asked me to.
- We omit *will* in time clauses (see Sections 1.4 and 4.2):
✗ *I'll phone you as soon as we will have arrived.*
✓ *I'll phone you as soon as we have arrived.*

SECTION I

Present Perfect

Present Perfect often combines with other tenses in the same sentence.

1 USES WITH OTHER PRESENT TENSES

We use Present Perfect with other Present tenses:

- with report/comment verbs or phrases (guess, imagine, suppose, etc.):
I reckon Gloria's been held up in traffic. Do you suppose they've forgotten they're meant to be here?
- with the phrase *This is / It's / That's the first / second / only, etc. time ...*:
This is the first time he's been late. It's the only time I've ever really got angry with him.
- when an event is unusual or unique in your life (often with a superlative and *ever* or *never*):
I've never met anybody who is so absent-minded.

However, we commonly use a Past tense to refer to somebody who is dead:

Princess Diana was the most extraordinary person I've ever read about.

- when commenting on the present results of something in the past (usually with *appear, seem, sound, etc.*):
He sounds as if he has run all the way here.
It seems they've already decided without consulting us.

2 USES WITH PAST TENSES

We use Present Perfect with Past tenses:

- to describe states or events that have continued since a time in the past (with *since, ever since, etc.*):
He's been a bit more careful since he had that warning.
Ever since I first heard it I've been trying to find a recording of that song.
- to describe long-term or repeated feelings and thoughts about past events:
I've often wondered why he decided to become a teacher. I've always felt we did the wrong thing when we took her on as an assistant.

3 USE WITH ANOTHER PRESENT PERFECT

We use Present Perfect with another Present Perfect:

- to describe two states that have existed since a time in the past:
Since I've known him, he's always worn the same sweater.

4 USE WITH FUTURE FORMS

In time clauses (after *when, as soon as, until, before, etc.*) we don't use *will*, and so the Future Perfect *will have done* is not possible. In these cases we use the Present Perfect to refer to the future:

We'll continue the meeting when he's recovered his composure.

5 USE WITH SINCE AND YET

Note the position and emphatic uses of *since* and *yet*:

There was no news this morning but we've since learned that she's in Rome.

I haven't met anyone yet who can run as fast as him.
or: *I've yet to meet anyone who ...*

6 COMMON PHRASES

They've made it! (= They've succeeded) *I've had enough.* (= I'm fed up. I don't want to do any more)
You've had it! (= You're in trouble) *That's torn it!* (= You, we, etc. have done something that someone else will complain strongly about) *Now you've done it!* (= You've done something seriously wrong)
She's arrived. (= She's achieved fame, success, acceptance, etc. at last) *He's lost it.* (= He's lost his patience or self-control) *You've got me there!* (= Good point: I've no idea what the solution is)



? check

Correct these sentences.

- It's the third time he missed a meeting.
- As soon as he will finish, he's going home.
- This is the best lasagne I ever have.
- Since we've known each other, he always shows impeccable manners.
- Since I've met her, I've never seen her lose her temper.

Practice

1 Tick (✓) the sentences that are correct. Correct those that are not.

- a Do you think Vicky's always known the truth about us?
- b That's been the second time you've forgotten to post something for me.
- c I haven't seen Peter since he begins seeing his new girlfriend.
- d Ever since we met, you never asked me what I prefer to do.
- e In all my life, I never spoke to someone who is quite so stupid.
- f I don't think Paul and Carol have seen much of each other of late.
- g This is the only occasion that I've seen him wearing a tie.
- h Since he's lived here, he was usually extremely friendly.
- i They'll join us after they'll get a bite to eat.
- j He says he hasn't yet come to a final decision.



2 Fill each of the gaps in this passage with one suitable word.

I've often (1) that Stefan's success as a teacher is due to his eccentricity as much as his knowledge of the subject. From the first time he ever (2) into a classroom, students have always loved him. They've probably (3) met anybody who displays such an extraordinary mixture of enthusiasm and great personal warmth. It (4) also probably the first time they've (5) somebody who always wears a leather jacket and a scarf even at the height of summer.

3 Fill each of the gaps in this passage with one suitable word.

'When did you really begin to feel at home here?' Paul asked.
'Oh, you've (1) me there!' John replied. 'Let's just say you won't feel you truly belong until you've (2) out with your colleagues and then made it up several times. Over the summer I've (3) it with all of them countless times, often over quite trivial things. I've lost (4) of the times I've said to myself – That's it! I've had (5)! But I come back the next day, time after time. I've often (6) why I do. As far as the boss goes, just wait until you make a major mistake. Your colleagues will go "Oooh, now you've (7) it!" or "Um, that's (8) it!", and the boss comes in and just smiles at you. Then you'll know you've (9) it. Then you'll definitely have (10).

4 Fill each of the blanks with a suitable word or phrase.

Example: I'm not going to go out again until *the storm has* blown over.

- a I'll phone him just as soon as typing all these letters.
- b I looked for that book everywhere but I'm afraid across it yet.
- c This isn't the first time he away from home.
- d I spoke to Sylvia last night: she sounds had a hard time recently.
- e I went to the new pizzeria last night: it does the eaten.
- f I've never understood what football so popular.
- g Since he got home from the camp, he but sleep.
- h I've yet over the shock of seeing her there.

5 Finish each of the sentences in such a way that it is as similar in meaning as possible to the sentence printed before it.

Example: Make sure you finish this book before you start on the others.

Don't start *the other books* until you have finished this one.

- a Nobody has seen Jo for over a month.
Jo was
- b Bergkamp's goal was the most extraordinary one I have ever seen.
I've yet
- c No one has asked me that before.
This is the first time
- d The journey to Paris took much longer before they built the Channel Tunnel.
Since the
- e It's almost a year since I stopped smoking.
I gave /
- f This café used to be a lot more popular before they opened the new one next door.
Since

SECTION 2

Other Perfect forms

1 PAST PERFECT

Not always necessary

Past Perfect emphasises that we are talking about a period before a time in the past. If the time sequence is clear (e.g. because we use *after*), both Past Simple and Past Perfect are possible. At other times Past Perfect is essential to understanding the sequence, and we often add *already*, *as soon as*, or *until*:

*I got to work **after** Simon **arrived** / **had arrived**.*

*When I arrived, they'd **already started**. (= they started before I arrived) When I **arrived**, they **started**. (= I arrived before they started)*

With definite time

Unlike Present Perfect, we can use Past Perfect with a definite time reference:

*I arrived at nine o'clock but he **had got there at eight**.*

With before

There is one exception to the time sequence rules on Past Perfect. When we use *before*, the verb in Past Simple can refer to something that takes place before the verb in Past Perfect. The first action may prevent the second from happening:

*The waiter **took** my plate away **before** I'd **finished** eating.*

*I **was blamed** for it **before** I'd even **had** a chance to defend myself.*

Unfulfilled plans

We use Past Perfect with report verbs and with *hope*, *intend*, *expect*, etc. to talk about plans that have not yet been fulfilled. *Had* is usually stressed in speech with this use:

*I **had hoped** to talk to him but he was too busy to listen.*

*I **had thought** of phoning him but decided against it.*

2 FUTURE PERFECT

With by

We can often use Future Perfect with the preposition *by* or the phrase *by the time* meaning 'at some point before the time mentioned or indicated':

*It's taking her so long to write that book that **by the time** she's finished it people **will have forgotten** the incident it's based on.*

Predicting

We can also use *will have done* to say what we think has probably happened:

*There's no point phoning: they'll **have gone out**.*

- We can use *should / ought to* or *may / might* instead of *will* if there is some uncertainty about the prediction of present or future:

*I **should have finished** making this cake by the time Sue comes home. (= I think I will have, but I'm not sure. See Unit 4, Section 3.2 for modal Perfects)*

3 USES OF PERFECT INFINITIVES

We use Perfect infinitives:

- after link verbs like *seem* and *appear* to refer to a previous time period (an ordinary *to*-infinitive will usually refer to the present or future):

*There **seems to have been** some sort of mistake.*

- after phrases expressing emotions and feelings:

*I'm sorry **to have kept** you waiting.*

*She was felt **not to have met** the standards required.*

4 PERFECT -ING FORMS

When talking about results and time, we can use a Perfect -ing form to emphasise that one thing happens before another:

*I didn't remember **having met** her before. **Having** finally **grasped** what I meant, he got down to work.*

watch out!

Perfect passives can sometimes be confusing because we use both *be* (= passive) and *have* (= Perfect) as auxiliaries:

*The refugees **have been prevented** from entering the country. This picture is thought **to have been painted** by a pupil of Rembrandt's.*

? check

Which of the points in this Section do these examples illustrate?

- 'How did you become a teacher?' 'I'd intended to be an actor, but things didn't work out.' 1
- I turned on the computer, but before I had managed to log on there was a power cut. 2
- After he told me what he wanted, we talked about the plans for the next day. 2
- The exhibition will have finished by the time I get around to seeing it. 2
- They appear to have accepted most of your terms.

Practice

1 Match the beginnings (1–8) with a suitable ending (a–h).

Example: 0 + i

- | | |
|---|---|
| (0 After I'd finished teaching earlier that morning) | a and had come to ensure that the school was run efficiently. |
| 1 He told me that | b he had made a terrible mistake. |
| 2 I asked him | c that he wanted to enrol as a student. |
| 3 He explained how a young man | d had come to reception. |
| 4 John had immediately assumed | e that the man was able to explain there had been a misunderstanding. |
| 5 So, before the young man had had a chance to say anything | f what had happened. |
| 6 John, who was in a terrible hurry, then left the man to it, | g John had given him an application form. |
| 7 It wasn't until he returned ten minutes later | h wondering why he looked so puzzled. |
| 8 He was actually a school inspector | (i I found John standing outside my classroom.) |

2 Correct any sentences that are unacceptable.

- By the time he is 50, he will live in this country for half his life.
- It's a surprise party and they won't know anything about it until they got here.
- They're probably planning a quiet evening together; I know they won't have guessed what we're doing.
- The other seventy guests should be arrived before Mikis and Maria.
- By the time we ~~will~~ have finished, everybody will have eaten and drunk as much as they can.

3 Cross out and correct eight errors in this extract from a composition. A ninth error has already been corrected.

Dear Sir,

I had recently been on a two-week holiday with your company to the island of Thassos.

I am sorry to ~~have said~~ say that it was the worst holiday I've ever had. Over the years I went on many holidays to Greece, a country I have now come to know quite well. I think I can safely say that, until this year, all of those holidays were wonderful. For example I have once spent six weeks on Crete, which I had not visited before. I had loved that holiday so much that I returned every spring for the last four years.

This year, however, was different. I honestly consider this to had been the worst holiday of my life. This is not the fault of Thassos: the fault lies entirely with your company whose inability to organise the simplest thing is quite unbelievable.

As both the outward and return flights have been delayed for several hours, there was nobody to meet us at the airport or transfer us to our hotel, and when we eventually did reach the hotel, we discovered it had been built over a mile from the beach. Reading your brochure carefully, we feel this was not what we have expected.

4 Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it is as similar as possible to the sentence printed before it.

Example: Don't use that milk until you've finished this carton.

Make sure *you've finished this carton before you use that milk.*

- I'm sure he will arrive before you get there.
By the time
- I reckon the journey to Cornwall is over 200 miles.
By the time we get
- After keying that report, could you perhaps check this order for me?
When that
- I'm sure Helen will have got there before everyone else.
Helen is
- We will fax you further details on receipt of your completed application form.
Having

5 Fill each of the blanks with a suitable word or phrase.

Example: All the best things *will have gone* if we don't get to the sale soon.

- I was really happy when they announced decided to get married.
- She proceeded to fix the faulty wiring, having first been switched off.
- It wasn't until he mentioned the conference that I met before.
- By next Christmas we decorating the house.
- He is planning completed all his coursework by next week.
- It's six o'clock: I imagine they for the airport by now.
- The suspect is believed fled the country.
- After he had lost his glasses, he but to buy another pair.

SECTION 3

Continuous forms

1 USES OF PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSES

Like other Perfect tenses, Perfect Continuous tenses focus on a past period that leads up to a later one. Perfect Continuous tenses, as with other Continuous tenses, show that an event continues and/or is temporary:

I've been meaning to tell you about it since the weekend. Next October I'll *have been playing* with this team for ten years. He'd *been driving* for hours and he needed a rest.

- We use Past or Present Perfect Continuous to talk about something that is incomplete, just finishing or about to change. The Past and Present Perfect Simple can suggest the action is finished:
I'd been staring at the computer screen all evening when a solution suddenly struck me. *I've been reading* 'War and Peace' again. (= I may not have finished)
I've read War and Peace again. (= I've finished)
- The Continuous can emphasise the action; the Simple focuses on the result:
What *have you been doing*? (= tell me about your activities) What *have you done*? (= tell me the result of your activities)
- The difference between choosing Continuous or Simple may only be a matter of emphasising that something is continuing and/or temporary:
I've been waiting here for over an hour.
(= emphasising that I still am)

2 USING PAST CONTINUOUS FOR PLANS

We can use Past Continuous to talk about plans in the past:

We were meeting at 8 o'clock and I was already late.

- We use *was going to* to talk about plans in the past that we still haven't carried out or that we no longer intend to carry out:
I was going to phone you but I forgot.
- We can use *I was thinking...* to introduce vague future plans:
I was thinking of going to London this weekend.

3 USING PAST CONTINUOUS FOR POLITE REQUESTS

We often use Past Continuous to introduce polite requests, suggestions or inquiries so that they

become more an invitation to discuss the subject than a demand for a yes or no answer:

I was thinking – would you mind swapping seats?
I was wondering if you wanted to go out this evening.
Were you looking for anything in particular?

watch out!

Note we can't use *I was thinking* with *whether* or *if*:

- ✗ ~~*I was thinking whether*~~ you'd like to come round to my place for coffee?
- ✓ *I was thinking* – would you like to come round to my place for coffee?
- I was wondering whether* you'd like to come round to my place for coffee?

4 CONTINUOUS INFINITIVES

Verb and other structures that can be followed by a *to*-infinitive can also be followed by a Continuous infinitive to emphasise that something is still continuing or is temporary:

It's ridiculous for him to be driving in central Athens at his age.

Several cyclists are thought to have been taking drugs during the race.

5 PERFECT CONTINUOUS PASSIVE

The Perfect Continuous passive is very uncommon because it involves two forms of *be*:

The Botley Road has been being widened for the past six weeks.

? check

Match the example sentences (1–5) with the explanations (a–e) of the uses of the Continuous.

- I was going to try to finish this this evening.
 - I was wondering whether you'd thought of going to see that new film?
 - He was blinking rapidly in the unaccustomed sunlight.
 - I was thinking of meeting Suzette later.
 - I've been thinking a lot recently about your idea.
- repeated action
 - plans you no longer have or are no longer sure about
 - vague future plans
 - polite suggestion
 - emphasising the continuing activity

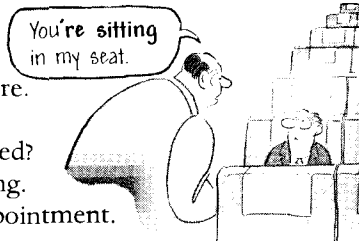
Practice

1 Tick (✓) the correct sentence, a or b.

Example: Which sentence would be said after one particular meal?

- a I've eaten too much. ✓ b I've been eating too much.

- Which sentence refers to a temporary situation?
a That lamp sits on that table over there.
b You're sitting in my seat.
- Which activity is probably not completed?
a I've been writing this essay all evening.
b I've written to him asking for an appointment.
- Which is a gradual process?
a The increase in traffic noise is becoming a real nuisance.
b John becomes President of Oxford Rotary Club in July.
- Which would you say when you look out of the window early one morning?
a It's been raining. b It was raining.
- Which is a more certain plan?
a I was thinking of spending the weekend at my sister's.
b I'm planning to spend the weekend at my sister's.
- You saw a colleague waiting for a bus on your way to work. Which would you say to your other colleagues when you get to the office to explain why she was there?
a She might have gone to see her dentist.
b She might have been going to see her dentist.



2 Tick (✓) the most suitable underlined verb. Sometimes both may be possible. The first has been done for you.

I don't normally go to the cinema. Not because I don't like it but because it's just a habit I have never got into. However, on this occasion I decided (✓) / was deciding to go because my friends had been constantly going / had constantly gone ⁽¹⁾ on about this film all week and eventually wore me down. It starred / was starring ⁽²⁾ some ephemeral Hollywood actor whom I had vaguely heard of but couldn't put a face to. We got to the cinema early to find people were already waiting / already waited ⁽³⁾ outside which suggested that my friends weren't the only ones who thought it was worth seeing – although I could still think of several other things I would rather having been doing / do ⁽⁴⁾ at that moment.

In the end, the film turned out / was turning out ⁽⁵⁾ to be not half as bad as expected, though I would have preferred / would have been preferring ⁽⁶⁾ something with a bit more action. The plot centred on two men who were planning to carry out some immensely complicated robbery, though what they completely failed to realise / were completely failing to realise ⁽⁷⁾ was that all the time their plans were being closely monitored / were closely monitored ⁽⁸⁾ by the police. Somewhat unpredictably, however, they got away with it because they changed / were changing ⁽⁹⁾ their plans at the last minute. It was okay but I'm not thinking / I don't think ⁽¹⁰⁾ of going again.

3 Match the questions (1–8) with suitable answers (a–h).

- Why didn't you call?
 - When do you think they'll be here?
 - Why did they look so hot and sweaty?
 - Why couldn't we use the rooms?
 - Why are they so exhausted?
 - Why didn't the students respond?
 - Why were they apprehended?
 - What time are they setting off tomorrow?
- They could be arriving at any moment.
 - I think they'd been working out in the gym.
 - They must have been doing something wrong.
 - I was going to, but I clean forgot.
 - They weren't listening.
 - Well, they hope to have been driving for five hours by lunchtime.
 - They were being cleaned.
 - They've been working all day up in the attic.

4 Write a new sentence as similar as possible in meaning to the original sentence, but using the word given.

Example: My original intention was to drive all the way. **going**
I was going to drive all the way.

- It occurred to me that you might like to come round this evening. **wondering**
- Our arguments over politics go back years. **arguing**
- My son has finally come to accept that there's no such thing as a free lunch. **dawning**
- Who is the organiser of this event? **running**
- I think he's at last beginning to agree with me. **round**

SECTION 4

The future

1 WAYS OF REFERRING TO THE FUTURE

The following table summarises the different structures we use to talk about the future.

Form	Example	Meaning
will	<i>I'll just go and get my coat.</i>	= an immediate decision about what you are going to do
will	<i>You'll be sick if you eat more chocolate.</i>	= a general prediction
be going to	<i>I'm going to stop in a minute.</i>	= a personal intention
be going to	<i>Look out! We're going to hit the car in front.</i>	= a prediction after looking at what is happening now
Present Continuous	<i>We're going to the café. Won't you join us?</i>	= fixed plans / arrangements
Present Simple	<i>The coach leaves in ten minutes.</i>	= an unalterable arrangement or fact
will + Continuous	<i>Don't phone too early because I'll be putting the baby to bed.</i>	= an action that will be in progress some time in the future
will + Continuous	<i>We'll be working on this until the end of the year.</i>	= an activity that will be happening during a period in the future
will + Continuous	<i>I'll give your letter to him – I'll be seeing him later.</i>	= an action that will happen because it is regular or decided
will + Perfect	<i>We'll have driven over five hundred miles by the time we get there.</i>	= an event that will be finished before a specified time in the future
will + Perfect Continuous	<i>We'll have been living here for ten years next May.</i>	= a state of affairs in progress for a period up to a specified time in the future
be + to-infinitive	<i>He is to be given an award. You're to stay here until you've apologised.</i>	= an official arrangement or order

- We use *shall* with *I* or *we* with the same meaning as *will*. However, it is becoming increasingly formal – its most common current use is in polite offers or to ask advice (see Unit 3, Section 1.1):
Shall I open the door for you? What shall we do now?

2 WILL IN TIME CLAUSES AND IF-CLAUSES

We omit *will* in time clauses after *when*, *as soon as*, *until*, *before*, etc:

I'm not going to speak to her until she's apologised.

However, with conditional clauses (after *if*, *unless*, *providing*, etc.) we can use *will*, but only:

- when we want emphasis and *will* makes an intention or promise stronger:
If you will insist on the best, then you must expect to pay more for it.
- in polite requests – *will* means 'be willing to':
If you'll hold these bags for me, I can open the door.

- We use *would* instead of *will* in reported speech and conditionals:
*They promised they would work on it all weekend.
Harry asked me if I would help him out.*

3 COMMON PHRASES

I'm (just) about to go out. (= in a very short time)

We were on the point of leaving when the bell rang.

We're due to meet in half an hour.

? check

Match the examples with the meanings in the table.


- Are you going to the match tomorrow?
- Are you going to go out this evening or not?
- My driving licence expires in 2030.
- I've had enough. I'll finish this tomorrow.
- We'll be sending you more details in the post.


Practice


1 Tick (✓) the most appropriate of the underlined words.


- She looks very pale. I think she'll / she's going to faint.
- I'll / I'm going to do that for you, if you like.
- I'll be / I'm going to be a rocket scientist when I grow up.
- 'Somebody's at the door.' 'I'll / I'm going to see who it is.'
- I need to be home early today so I leave / am leaving at 4.00.
- We'll be in plenty of time providing the traffic is not / will not be too bad.
- She asked if I would / will be so kind as to give her a lift.
- What sort of job do you think you will do / will be doing in a few years time?
- By the time you get back, all the food will have gone / will go.
- The two Prime Ministers are to / shall discuss the current economic crisis.


2 Fill each of the numbered gaps in this passage with one suitable word.


 'Remember that by the terms of the contract you are due (1) to leave before midday,' the voice said.


 'Yes. Yes, I know. I was (2) about to pack when you rang.'


 'Midday,' the voice repeated.


 'I know. As I said, I was on the (3) of leaving – packing, then leaving.'


 'That is (4) you want to pay for another week,' the voice continued.

 'No. No, I'll (5) out by twelve,' I stammered.

 'It does say very clearly on your door that all guests are (6) vacate their rooms by midday,' the voice went on, quite unnecessarily, I thought.

 'Look. I've told you,' I shouted, 'I'll have (7) before the clock strikes twelve! I'm (8) in less than fifteen minutes. The flies, ants and cockroaches will soon (9) partying in a punctually vacated apartment. Have no fear.'

 'Kindly remember that the new occupants (10) in at ...'

 'I know! Midday!' I screamed, and threw down the phone.

3 Fill each of the gaps in the following sentences with a suitable word or phrase.

Example: I was just about to have a cup of coffee when Sue called.

- He was resigning when the news of his promotion came through.
- Our builder told me he best to get the materials as soon as he could.
- I think we'd better leave this restaurant as soon the bill.
- If that little boy carries on like that, he accident before long.
- By the time I qualify, I law for six years.
- Our company is over by a multi-national.

4 A word is missing from most of the numbered pairs of lines in the passage. Mark the place with a line /, and write the missing word on the right. If a pair of lines does not need a word added, put a tick (✓). The first two have been done for you.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| Despite all the lessons we have learned from history, | ✓ |
| it is difficult to conceive what people are likely / be doing | to |
| 1 a hundred years / now. During this century, so many changes have | ..... |
| 2 taken place that any idea as to what new invention is about become | ..... |
| 3 an integral part of our lives has become more of a guessing game | ..... |
| 4 than ever. For a start, in ten years' time, today's | ..... |
| 5 innovations will probably have out of date. | ..... |
| 6 There / little doubt that many of our habitual, taken-for-granted | ..... |
| 7 activities such as shopping and going to school will disappeared by | ..... |
| 8 the year 2100, largely due to the growth of electronic media. But what | ..... |
| 9 we have little idea about is how this affect our personal relationships. | ..... |
| 10 Or rather, not ours as this will be long after we left this earth. What | ..... |
| 11 concerns us is how our great-great-grandchildren / be living. | ..... |
| 12 Will people still talking to each other face to face, or | ..... |
| 13 only via computers? Will they still be able to find a friendly shoulder | ..... |
| 14 to cry on when they feeling low? In the long run, who knows? | ..... |